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EU-25

Livestock and Products

EU Directorate for Health and Consumer Protection presents its TSE Roadmap

2005

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Report Highlights:

On July 15, 2005, DG SANCO presented a whole series of possible amendments to its TSE policy in its "TSE Roadmap. These possible amendments to EC Regulation 999/2001 result from recent years' improvement in the EU-25 BSE situation and also addresses recent problems that have come up with the current measures. These amendments could halve the cost of the present BSE/TSE measures in the EU or more. Some of these amendments could also lower the present burden on some U.S. exports of processed animal by-products.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
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[E3]

On July 15, 2005 EC DG SANCO published its "[The TSE Roadmap](http://www.useu.be/agri/srm.html)"¹. This document lists possible amendments to the current BSE legislation. After being discussed in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain & Animal Health (SCOFAH), some of the following amendments will expectedly be implemented in the coming years. Regular updates on the European BSE/TSE situation can be found on our website at <http://www.useu.be/agri/srm.html>.

Amendments in the short and medium term (2005-2009) are in the fields of:

- **Specified Risk Material (SRM)**: a draft proposal to rise the age from which the vertebral column in cattle has to be defined as an SRM and removed from the food chain from 12 to 24 months is already being discussed in SCOFAH. Standards for tallow, collagen and gelatin processing could also be relaxed pending positive scientific advice.
- **Feed Ban**: past problems with environmental contamination of bones in beet pulp, have triggered the need to abandon the zero-tolerance for a risk-based approach. A further relaxation of the fishmeal ban is also anticipated.
- **Monitoring Programs**: the goal is to reduce the number of BSE testing by using epidemiological considerations in targeting the testing of animals rather than testing all healthy animals older than 30 months. The extended monitoring of small ruminants after the finding of a BSE-infected goat will be evaluated in the second half of 2005 and a survey of deer for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) will be initiated in 2006.
- **Categorization of countries according to their BSE risk**: Based on the new OIE categorization system, the EC intends to conclude a new categorization of countries by July 1, 2007.
- **Review of culling policy with regard to TSE's in small ruminants**: a larger use of rapid testing should allow a relaxation of the provisions to cull the whole herd if TSE is detected.
- **Cohort culling in bovine animals**: the goal is to stop the mandatory immediate culling of the cohort animals linked to a positive BSE case. However, for reasons of possible export consequences, the decision to stop the cohort culling would be left to the responsibility of the Member States.
- **UK restrictions**: pending a favorable outcome of the UK audit by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), the embargo on UK beef exports should be lifted.

Amendments in the long-term (2009-2014) include:

- A gradual decrease in the level of surveillance to a level in line with OIE recommendations.
- A complete revision of the need for the removal of SRM's
- The introduction of a system of certification of herds

Alternative scenarios could include:

- A differentiation between BSE measures in MS with a non-favorable trend
- A strengthening of measures for small ruminants in case of the confirmation of BSE at a large scale in goats and sheep
- A decision to remove SRM from deer in the case of confirmation of CWD.

Conclusion

This new TSE roadmap is the result of the continued positive trend in the BSE situation within the EU-25 and the concern to reduce the cost of the present measures, which are overly costly compared to the real public health threat that BSE poses. The changes

¹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/biosafety/bse/roadmap_en.pdf

suggested in this roadmap would seriously amend EC Regulation 999/2001, which was introduced as of July 1, 2001 and more commonly known as the "TSE Regulation".

Several of the proposed measures could also lower the burden on U.S. exports, mainly in the case of processed animal by-products like tallow, collagen and gelatin.

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